



VE3FW—LARC call sign honours the memory of the Founding President P.J. "Pat" O'shea

THE LAKEHEAD AMATEUR RADIO CLUB JOURNAL

November 2005
Volume 75, Issue 09

HI-Q

Executive Positions Filled

Inside this issue:

The Prez Sez.....	2
Financial Report	2
Last Meeting Minutes	3
PropNet—When You're not around	4
More with Less	5
Mobile Communication Center	6
Confucius Say...	7
Editors QSK...	7
Club Executive	8
Public Service	8
Club Information	8
Membership Form	9

- Next Meeting
Thursday
November 10, 2005 at
the McIntyre Building,
Confederation College
Room 191
at 7:30 pm EDT
- Annual LARC dinner
meeting will be held
Saturday, Feb 11, 2006
at the Slovak
- Amateur Radio Classes
begin Jan 19, 2006 at
Confederation College
contact:
Bill, VE3XT at 344-1848

Our last meeting on October 13, 2005 meeting brought in a new President unanimously!

A big welcome to **John, VA3JMS** as our new President! John has been LARC's contact with CANWARN and has been busy keeping us up to date with Environment Canada's issues.

John has a lot of work cut out for him, and the members are confident he will definitely be a great asset to the future of our club!

Also unanimously elected was **Mark VA3MVR** as Director to fill the seat given up by **Leo VE3ATC**. Welcome aboard Mark. With your marketing abilities we stand to really gain from your presence on the executive board!

Bill VE3XT will be hosting the Amateur Radio classes in January. For more information call Bill at 344-1848.

Some new initiatives will be presented at Thursday's meeting that will be important to the future of LARC involving new (to us) ways of gaining members and generating interest in Amateur Radio in general.

We have a lot to offer, and using today's technology, we are at the forefront of communications methods in several fields.

Our work will be to get the message out, in an interesting and fun way so interested youth as well as any curious adults will have information about Amateur Radio, and the LARC club, available to them.

Hopefully, in the future, Hi-Q will carry a section on the Big Thunder QRP group, who have a very active membership. They are involved with construction methods, compact radio kits, portable antennas, microwave communications, and a whole lot of general information. The meetings and dates are informal, but very informative.

With our first snowfall last week, a reminder winter coming, our activity should pick up, and it will be great to see our members back in the chair with their mikes, or CW keys, and for that matter.... Computers, all warmed up and ready to go again!

It's a long winter, let's take advantage of those openings in the bands. We been through a rough propagation period, on HF especially!

LARC OPEN ACCESS REPEATERS

VE3YQT	Mount Baldy	147.060 (-600) Phone Patch
VE3TBR	St. Joseph's	146.820 (-600) Phone Patch 442.075 (+5 MHz)
VE3BGA	Hillcrest H.S.	145.450 (-600) (IRLP Node VA3LU 123.0 Hz)



The Prez Sez.....

First of all I would like to thank everyone for voting for me, (Hi Hi), but seriously, I look forward to serving the club, and it's members to the best of my ability, and to capitalize on what our past presidents have accomplished, and build on their directions.

The main focus on all of our minds is how to increase club members. We are presently putting together some great ideas and will present them at the next general meeting. The demographics of our future members has changed and we need to focus our efforts on programs such as ILRP, Echo Link etc.. to attract these new people in.

I've been informed that all of our repeaters are working fine, and we are still looking for a location for the repeater that was donated by Environment Canada, I feel we really need to source a location next spring to help broaden the gap between the towns West of us.

We did have snow didn't we? Well still not enough to officially open antenna season, but I'm sure its just around the corner.

The February dinner plans are just about complete, we are looking at having some entertainment this year as a guest speaker. details to follow.

In closing as usual, all of your suggestions, and comments are appreciated so please forward anything to me at 767-3631 or jsacek@tbaytel.net.

73's
John VA3JMS

Lakehead Amateur Radio Club Treasurers Report

Opening Balance - October 6, 2005	\$3,522.44
Income	
Memberships	\$660.00
50/50 Draw	\$16.50
Bank Interest	\$0.02
Total Income	\$676.52
Expenses	
Thunder Bay Telephone	\$44.02
Bank Service Fee	\$0.50
Club Insurance	\$1,059.48
Total Expenses	\$1,104.00
Closing Balance - November 2, 2005	\$3,094.96

Joe Coghlan - VE3TBX
Treasurer



LARC October 13, 2005 MINUTES

Meeting commenced at 7:35pm Opening remarks by **Bob VE3RVA**

Minutes from last meeting: n/a motion by **Bob VE3VHN** to accept as recorded, second by **Bill VE3XT**

Correspondence:

- Letter and cheque for \$100 from the LU Thunder Wolves 20 mile road race
- CNIB Amateur Radio Program looking for donation motion by Rob VA3KRH to decide dollar amount at next months meeting, second by Manual VE3MPT
- York Regional Ham Fest to be held Oct 29th
- Plaque from Thunder Bay fire fighters in appreciation of 15yrs continuous support May 23/05
- Letter of resignation from **Leo VE3ATC** for the position of Director

Treasurers report:

- Printed in Hi-Q balance as of Oct 6th \$3522.44, motion by **Mike VE3ZG** to accept, second by **Brad VE3MXJ**

Committee Reports: Equipment – Auto patch back in service, Andy has given Terry a computer system.

RAC- Nothing to report

ARES- Nothing to report , Randy absent

CANWARN: Another slow summer, net activated on once with 6 operators checking in, several watches issued. John, and Brad did not receive pages or calls for either, John to address with Environment Canada.

PUBLIC SERVICE: Club participated in the Run for The Cure. Christmas parade coming up in Nov

COMMAND TRAILER: Moving to new location in aviation building.

Old business:

- Elect new president and director
- Bob VE3VHN** nominated from the floor, **John Sacek VA3JMS** for pres, **Mark Valliant VA3MVR** for director. **Norm, VE3XRC** made a motion to elect both people. Positions excepted by both.

New Business:

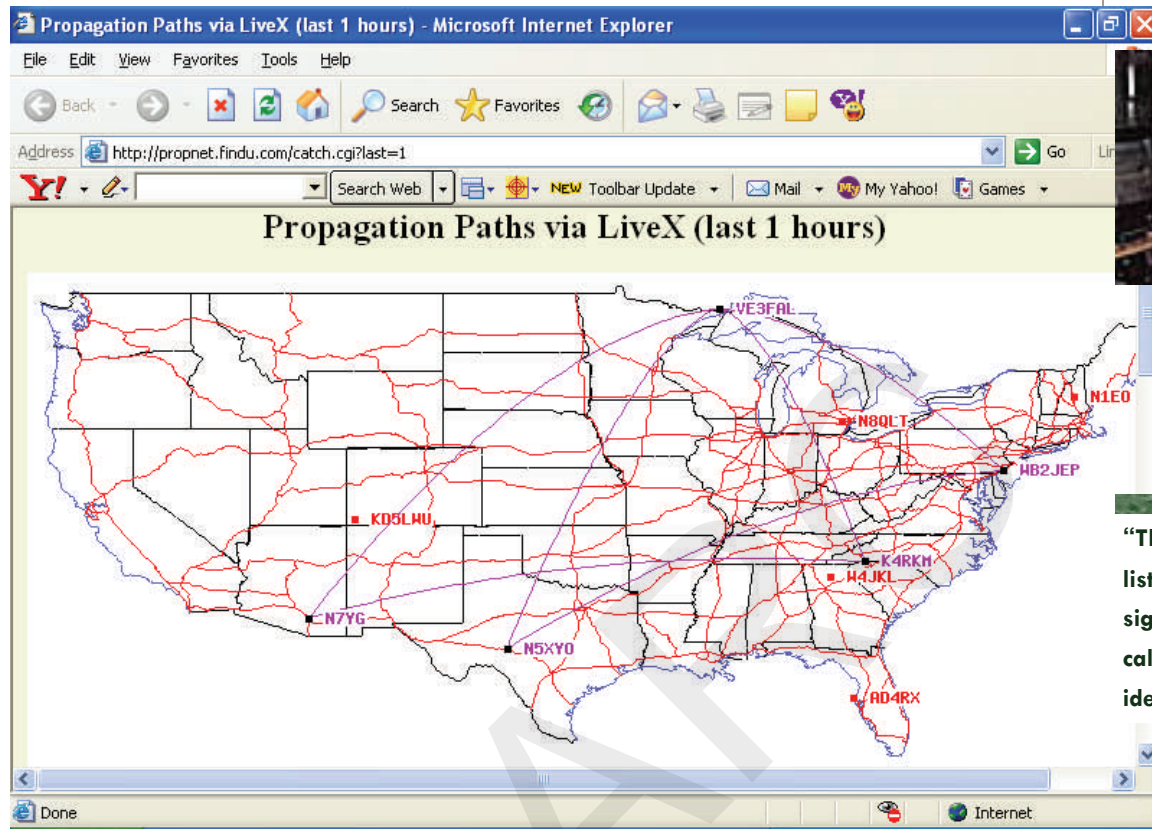
- Clarence VE3WCW** would like donations again to purchase candy for parade, **Fort VE3MCZ** has offered to purchase what is needed.
- Dinner meeting to be held at Slovak hall as Italian hall was too costly, tickets to be out by Dec, price to be between \$22.00 and \$23.00/ person
- ARES net any interest? Decided to wait and talk to Randy
- Need speakers for regular meetings as well as dinner meeting. Brad suggested Bruce Wire, John to call
- Ham classes to start in Jan 06, rumour that Ed will not be doing, this to be confirmed.
- Budget to be presented by Joe at Nov meeting.
- Paid members will be listed in December Hi-Q. Informed all members again that these are now due.
- Looking at a possible ham display at intercity mall, Bob to look into availability
- Exec to look for new insurance company for 2007 as rates have been going up.
- No other new business

50/50: Total \$17.00, **Brad VE3MXJ** winner of \$8.50

Motion to adjourn by **Norm VE3XRC**, second by **Bob VE3VHN**

PropNet-What does happen when you're not around?

- Fred VE3FAL



Fred VE3FAL

"This neat program will listen and transmit a PSK signal that includes your call, grid and a special identifier"

<http://w2ev.rochesterny.org/PropNET/>

Ever wonder what band conditions do during the day and to what areas of the country are best to work during certain times of the day? The PropNet project can tell you just that. This neat program will listen and transmit a PSK signal that includes your call, grid and a special identifier for each band that you might operate. The program can be used on both transmit and receive, or even by the shortwave listener who just wants to watch band conditions. This idea is based on the APRS programs that are out there being used by other amateur radio operators. The program is connected to the internet via LiveX and passes on all catches to the server and then plots them on a map to show the paths that are available during the period being used. The information shows the station that transmitted the signal, the station who heard the signal, time and IMD (signal) of the station. From there it is plotted on the map that you see above. As you can see on Tuesday Oct 11 2005 I had paths into N7YG, N5XYO, WB2JEP and K4KRM.

The program will also auto send all received reports at the end of the day via email at 2359z. This information is then passed on to all on an email list and passed on for other PropNet users to see.

The program is free and can be found at the above link. You need a radio, cable from radio to soundcard, and you will be good to go.

Give it a try and see what is happening on the bands. This program works on all bands from 440 megs down to 160 meters and even VLF. A great tool for plotting propagation.

Fred
VE3FAL



More with Less

– Phil Moorey, VE3AXL

While trying to get the best battery systems for our QRP radios VE3XT and I purchased AA NIMH batteries. We needed chargers, so we built them using special Maxim charging ICs. These chargers allowed us to charge out batteries using switching wall warts and in my case even my solar panel.

Recent information on the FT817 user group indicated that this radio operated more efficiently on 9.6 volts rather than 12volts. This sounded good, so instead of just changing the charger circuit to operate on the 9.6 volts rather than the 12volts, CPU I decided to make the charger package as compact as possible. More with less!

I replaced electrolytic capacitors with tantalums, I remounted the pass transistor on a heat sink from a CPU, and even used special thin wire to make things compact.

You know how it is when you are going to just make a few changes! I ended up rebuilding the entire circuit. The wiring was checked, everything looked fine. When I plugged in the battery pack and the wall wart I watched in horror as the little IC began to blister and actually bubble then give a little puff of smoke. Not good! I went bed in disgust!

The next approach was to check the wiring with the ohm meter. The resistor values matched the circuit, there were no shorts and the solder joints were ok. Everything looked good. I reinstalled another IC plugged in the battery pack and the wall wart and immediately removed them again. I placed my finger tip on the IC, and burnt the tip of my finger!

A few days later, the cooling off period for myself and the poor IC I went at the circuit again. This time I dug deeper knowing the resistors were ok and there were no direct shorts, but I did find a shorted capacitor. Once again the IC was installed and everything was quickly disconnected. No smoke and the chip wasn't even warm. We reconnected everything and the little smoke stayed inside the IC. Yeah!

When the circuit is operating, the indicator led lights up showing that current is passing through the transistor to the battery pack. There was no smoking IC but there was no light in the led either. All this from a circuit that worked fine a week ago!

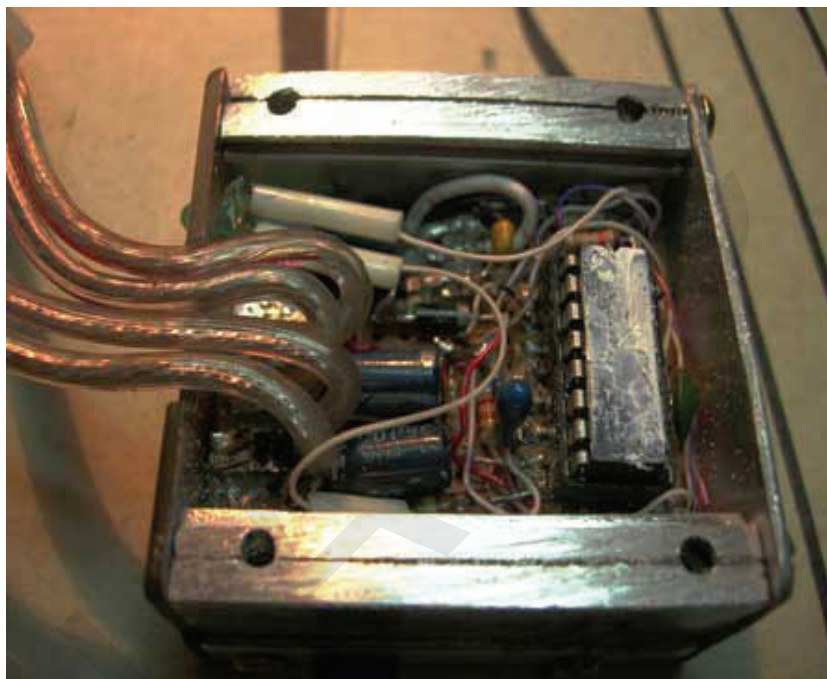
Ok, lets think this out. There is power to the emitter of the pass transistor but nothing out of the collector. Did I smoke the pass transistor as well? I replaced the transistor but still no light in the led and not current flow through the new transistor. What ???

Midnight engineering and I remember that I have another charger for a different application using the same is that still works. Off to sleep as tomorrow the problem will be solved!

After supper I open the working charger and replace the good IC with the one from the one being improved and reengineered. The led lights, the current flows, the heatsink gets hot and life is good.

I plug in the IC from the spare charger into the improved one and no light in the led, and no current flow. Well it's not the IC, not the pass transistor, maybe it's the led. Feeling like a Canadian Tire Technician I replace the led knowing that it is really is ok, and it is.

(continued on next page)



Phil VE3AXL

"I watched in horror as the little IC began to blister and actually bubble then give a little puff of smoke."

More with Less—Phil VE3AXL(continued)

I am getting so desperate that I read the data sheet for the IC. There is something about the sensing resistor in the grounding circuit that determines the state of charge of the battery. The resistor value is recalculated again but the damn thing worked fine before.

At work I bitch to my son about my frustration, and he quietly asks if I have redrawn the circuit from the physical parts that I have connected together. Well not really.

After supper I get out the paper and pencil and begin to redraw a circuit that is forever burnt into my brain. Yes this wire goes here and then to pin 15, and yes the ground wire goes from pin 13 to the ground pad. The wires to the wall wart are ok and the positive lead the battery pack is good. I don't see the ground wire connection the negative lead of the battery to the ground pad. It must be there under the filter capacitor. I gently pry up the capacitor and even remove it from the circuit board. There is no wire there. It was there, I am sure it was, but maybe that was a few weeks ago before I made this new and improved version. More with less is good up to a point, but I guess that all the connections must be there to make things work.

Yeah, I am relieved to have my led light, and my pass transistor pass current and heat up my heat sink, but now I have to admit to my son that the advice that I gave long ago was really good advice even if I didn't follow it myself! ◇



Mobile Communication Center

The Mobile Communication Center will now be stored at the Confederation College building at the Airport.

These pictures were taken by **Marion VE3MJN** October 16, 2005 when the trailer was first brought to the building.

Bob VE3RVA is shown helping to clean up the building. **Mike VE3ZG**, **Mark VA3MVR** and **Marion VE3MJN** also helped.

Reminder—The annual LARC dinner meeting will be held Saturday, February 11, 2006 at the Slovak. Mark this date on your calendar. Tickets will be available at the meeting in December. Cost will be \$25.00 per person. Hope to see you there.

Tnx to **Bob VE3RVA**





Editors QSK...

Well, we are underway, with a newly elected President, **John VA3JMS** and the filling of a Directors position by **Mark VE3MVR** during Octobers regular meeting. Our executive positions are now all filled.

December's Hi-Q will have a list of all paid up members for the 2005-06 season. Be sure to pay your dues and make the list a big one!

I have received some emails with suggestions from our members. These are worth considering!

- a standard membership application be included with each Hi-Q
- copies of Hi-Q be left at dentist and doctors waiting rooms
- video and sound clips in Hi-Q?

Well, the first one is done, starting this issue, a membership form and information on LARC membership is added.

Quite possibly, leaving some back issues of Hi-Q around is very cost

effective, and will help keep our club in the publics eye! How about it, Executives?

Last, but not least, you will have to let me know if adding sound and video would be beneficial! Some of our members are on dial up and the added file size may be a hindrance because of the download times? Maybe short ones?

I am looking for back copies of Hi-Q to put into binders, as well as a CD for the club. If you have any, I would be happy to make copies and return the originals to you! If you already have started a similar project, let me know and we can combine our efforts!

Thanks to all the contributors for this months Hi-Q! Your newsletter is only as good as we all make it!

That's it for now.

73, Leo VE3ATC
email: ve3atc@spruce.ca

See you at the next meeting on Thursday!

ON THE WEB

Looking for tower pictures?

1,283 photos at

<http://www.necrat.com>

-thanks to John, VE3EMI

— . . . —

Check out this site

<http://www.ledshoppe.com/>

for great LED flashlights and misc. computer gadgets. Prices are very good and items are shipped free from Hong Kong.

If you use coupon code 3MORE take 10% off.

-thanks to Andy, VE3INI

Next regular meeting

Thursday

November 10, 2005

McIntyre Building, Confederation College

Room 191

7:30 pm EDT

Confucius Say.....

Confucius say...

"If you worry about yesterday's failures, today's successes will be few."

Confucius Say...

"The best way to save face, is to keep the lower part of it shut."

Confucius Say...

"A friend is someone who thinks you're a good egg even though you're slightly cracked."

**THE LAKEHEAD AMATEUR
RADIO CLUB JOURNAL**

LARC—Suite 184
1100C Memorial Ave.
Thunder Bay, Ontario
Canada P7B 4A3

Club E-mail: VE3FW@rac.ca

LARC Website
<http://www.larclub.net>

Hi-Q Editor

E-mail: ve3atc@spruce.ca
Leo, VE3ATC, VA3UO 939-1020

Hi-Q is published monthly on the Sunday preceding the monthly meeting. Monthly meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, except for July and August. Your submissions are welcome at any time. Submit early to ensure publication in next issue! Send to editor at ve3atc@spruce.ca



LARC is a member of RAC

LARC PUBLIC SERVICES**ARES**

District Emergency Coordinator

VE3FAL Fred Lesnick 577-0789

Emergency Coordinator

VA3OJ Randy Gottfred 474-0910

CANWARN

VA3JMS John 767-3631

VE3MXJ Brad 767-0628

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

VE3MXJ Brad 767-0628

VA3JMS John 767-3631

RAC

Radio Amateurs of Canada

**LARC
SENATE**

Keith Fiske
Pat Doherty
Dave Kimpton
Laurie Bridgett

VE3JQ
VE3PD
VE3AVS
VE3BCD

**LARC
EXECUTIVE
2005—2006****President**

John Sacek VA3JMS 767-3631

Vice-President

Bob Hanson VE3RVA 767-6924

Secretary

Terry Stewardson VA3LU 577-9439

Treasurer

Joe Coghlan VE3TBX 344-6566

Directors

Brad Harris VE3MXJ 767-0628

Manuel Migueis VE3MPT 475-5686

Fort Michelizzi VE3MCZ 475-0971

Mark Vaillant VA3MVR

Hi-Q Editor

Leo Wehrstedt VE3ATC 939-1020

Past President

Bill Unger VE3XT 344-1848

About LARC

Lakehead Amateur Radio Club members have all levels of interest and knowledge in the wide spectrum of amateur radio.

Monthly meetings and contact with other members allow us to share and discuss different ideas, and to learn from each other.

LARC membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, September through June

at 7:30 PM at the

McIntyre Building, Confederation College

Room 191

Each meeting consists of a mix of technical and light-hearted topics, with a break for meeting friends and new friends.

Anyone with an interest in ham radio is invited to join us.

Amateur radio classes are also administered by LARC to help you with your Amateur Radio License
contact any of the Executive members above for more information

**2005/2006 MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION**

LAKEHEAD AMATEUR RADIO CLUB INC
1100C MEMORIAL AVE, SUITE 184,
THUNDER BAY, ONT P7B4A3

CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP

FULL MEMBERSHIP \$35.00-open only to licensed amateurs

NAME: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

ADDRESS: _____ **CITY** _____

TELEPHONE: () _____ **POSTAL CODE** _____

MAY WE PUBLISH THE PHONE NUMBER yes / no

MAY WE DELIVER HI-Q BY E-MAIL? yes / no

CALL(S) _____

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP- immediate family residing at the same address holding licenses.
\$35.00 plus \$10.00 for each additional amateur.

NAMES AND CALLS _____

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP- \$15.00-open to persons enrolled full time in an education
facility, list School and program _____

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP-\$20.00-upon approval of the Board and open to:

1)Non holders of an amateur radio license.

2)Licensed amateurs living outside the immediate Thunder Bay area or are unable to attend regular meetings of the club.

If you feel you qualify for associate membership, please indicate why, on a separate sheet, to be used by the Board to consider your application.

Please mail or bring this form to the September meeting with your cash or cheque for membership fees. Cheques should be made payable to Lakehead Amateur Radio Club.
Applications and cheques can also be dropped off at the above address.

DEADLINE FOR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL IS 30 SEPTEMBER